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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 25 June 1993, at 10 a.m.

President:

Mr. KALPAGE
(Vice-President)

(Sri Lanka)

- Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields [47]
 - (a) Report of the Secretary-General
 - (b) Draft resolutions
 - (c) Draft decision

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Kalpagé (Sri Lanka), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 47 (continued)

RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/47/534)
- (b) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/47/L.58, A/47/L.60)
- (c) DRAFT DECISION (A/47/L.59)

The PRESIDENT: This morning the General Assembly will resume its consideration of agenda item 47.

Members will recall that at the forty-seventh plenary meeting of the General Assembly, held on 27 October 1992, the President of the General Assembly informed the Assembly that he was establishing an open-ended working group on agenda item 47 and that he had requested Mr. Ramiro Piriz Ballon, Permanent Representative of Uruguay, to chair the working group on his behalf.

The President of the General Assembly has asked me to read out the following statement:

"It is with regret that I am unable to be present at this meeting of the General Assembly on agenda item 47, 'Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields'.

"I should like to emphasize that one of the draft resolutions before the Assembly is the result of long, exhaustive and difficult informal consultations undertaken on my behalf by Ambassador Piriz Ballon of Uruguay, as Chairman of the ad hoc working group. I wish to thank him for his untiring efforts during the last nine months in guiding the activities of the group in such a constructive and effective way.

(The President)

"My thanks also go to all those delegations which have shown political will and understanding for their goal-oriented approach and numerous and valuable comments, suggestions and ideas.

"It is my strong belief that the action to be taken at this meeting will better serve the need for a strong United Nations role in international cooperation for development.

"The wide scope of the reforms will ensure improvements at both the policy-making and the operational levels. In this way, the present overlapping and unnecessary duplication of work between the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly will be avoided. These measures will enhance the functions and powers of the Economic and Social Council as the main policy-making and coordinating body in the area of economic and social development, within the framework of the United Nations Charter.

"At a time of major political and economic changes taking place throughout the world, it is my hope that the General Assembly will today take an important practical step forward on the road to restructuring and revitalizing the United Nations in order to fulfil its vast responsibilities in promoting international cooperation for development."

Before calling on the Permanent Representative of Uruguay, who will report on the outcome of the consultations held in the working group, I wish to express our deep appreciation for his vigorous efforts.

I call now on Mr. Ramiro Piriz Ballon, Permanent Representative of Uruguay and Chairman of the ad hoc working group on agenda item 47.

Mr. PIRIZ BALLON (Uruguay), Chairman of the ad hoc working group on agenda item 47 (interpretation from Spanish): I wish first of all to convey my profound thanks to the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Ganev, and to you, Sir, for the excessively kind words about my efforts to carry out the tasks assigned to me.

At the beginning of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the President of the Assembly assigned me the honour - and the very difficult task - of presiding over the negotiations on one of the most complex and controversial items on our agenda. The work of the Assembly's ad hoc working group took place over more than nine months and continued the work carried out in prior years with a view to achieving the profound reforms that, by consensus, all Member States demanded.

During this period of more than nine months, there were several periods of activity. The first included a series of formal, informal and informal-informal meetings of the working group, during which there was progress in the negotiation of a large portion of the texts on the basis of the document submitted by the Group of 77 and the comments made by various delegations and groups of delegations. Then the hubbub of the General Assembly and the end-of-year holidays imposed a pause in our work; we resumed in March, with two weeks of very intensive negotiations in which all groups participated fully. That stage culminated in the final draft of document A/47/L.58, which is before the Assembly this morning.

Subsequently, the group held three formal meetings to gain final agreement on the text. While a broad majority favoured the document, some countries had reservations on two paragraphs. It was decided to allow more time for the parties concerned to negotiate a way out and inform the Chairman

(Mr. Piriz Ballon, Chairman,
ad hoc working group on
agenda item 47)

of the result; needless to say, the Chairman followed closely the efforts being made by all delegations to find a compromise.

Although, using formulas negotiated by the Chairman, it was possible to improve two paragraphs of the draft text, as I shall explain in due course, the deadline has passed without the achievement of a formula acceptable to all, that is a consensus formulation. For that reason, and noting that there was no time for further negotiations, I now submit to the Assembly the results of our negotiations.

I know that their substantive merits are well known, and I shall confine myself to highlighting three of the results of our work: first, the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council in its functions and in its authority for system-wide coordination; secondly, rationalization of work among the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and subsidiary bodies; and thirdly, rationalization and harmonization of the agendas of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. It is my understanding that, if adopted, these provisions would enter into force on 1 January 1994.

I wish now to revise the text of document A/47/L.58 to reflect the two improvements I mentioned, which take into account the concerns of many countries.

First, paragraph 34, part III (D) of annex I, has been deleted. In its place the following paragraph should be inserted as operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution:

(Mr. Piriz Ballon, Chairman,
ad hoc working group on
agenda item 47)

(spoke in English)

"Decides that additional efforts shall be made to further improve the functioning of the United Nations in the field of operational activities. Appropriate arrangements should be made for a comprehensive review of the implementation of the present resolution, including the issue of the composition of the Executive Boards, and of the decisions on financing. These matters could be considered at a high-level meeting of the Council in 1996 and at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly."

(spoke in Spanish)

The present paragraph 5 of the draft resolution would be renumbered as paragraph 7.

(Mr. Piriz Ballon, Chairman,
ad hoc working group on
agenda item 47)

Secondly, operative paragraph 3 of resolution 47/199 is incorporated into paragraph 29 of annex 1, so that paragraph 29 reads,

(spoke in English)

"As part of the overall reform process and in order to strengthen the funding mechanism, there is a need for a substantial increase in resources for operational activities for development on a predictable, continuous and assured basis, commensurate with the increased needs of developing countries, as stated in resolution 47/199. Any new funding system should include mechanisms for all participating countries to demonstrate their responsibility and commitment to the programmes and funds. Such mechanisms should distinguish between the financing arrangements for contributions by developed countries and others in a position to do so, as against the capacity for voluntary contributions from developing countries."

(spoke in Spanish)

I thus present this text for the Assembly's consideration, with the understanding that the regional groups of countries, as appropriate and in accordance with their internal practices and procedures, will make all necessary efforts to guarantee the representation and rotation of their members in the elective bodies.

Also in this respect, I have been asked to stress that, as regards elections for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Board, following the adoption of this draft resolution - that is to say, if this draft resolution should be adopted - Japan will be included among the countries of the Group of Western European and Other States.

(Mr. Piriz Ballon, Chairman,
ad hoc working group on
agenda item 47)

Finally, I must announce that for lack of time documents A/47/L.59 and A/47/L.60 have not been dealt with. The Secretariat should review the Second Committee's biennial programme of work before it is considered in plenary. Document A/47/L.60 should be considered during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): Appearing on today's agenda is the consideration of draft resolution -

The PRESIDENT: I call on the Permanent Representative of Uruguay on a point of order.

Mr. PIRIZ BALLON (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): I kindly ask you, Mr. President, to read out the list of sponsors of this draft resolution.

The PRESIDENT: The sponsors of draft resolution A/47/L.58 are Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): Appearing on today's agenda is the consideration by the General Assembly of the "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields".

The draft resolution under consideration presents problems for a significant number of countries, and I wish to say that I am speaking on behalf of an important group of countries that are members of the Group of 77.

As is obvious, this draft resolution is important for the future of the Organization and the future of the social and economic fields, and this group of countries on whose behalf I speak finds it highly inadvisable to put it, at

(Mr. Jaramillo, Colombia)

this time, to the vote, a confrontational vote without a prior agreement. This week's reigning spirit of collaboration and extensive cooperation between North and South - now termed the "spirit of Rio" - was much in evidence in the Commission on Sustainable Development. It is in that spirit that I take the liberty of invoking rule 74 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to request that the Assembly not take action today and that a meeting be set for the month of September so that we will have time during the rest of the forty-seventh session to seek the necessary agreement between parties, in the spirit of collaboration between North and South.

I repeat: This very important group of countries considers it highly inadvisable to put the draft resolution to the vote and thus bring about a confrontation between North and South, or between one country and another, on the very important issue now before us. We wish to use the time available before the end of the forty-seventh session to try to find the necessary agreement in this area.

I formally request, then, that action not be taken today, that consideration of draft resolution A/47/L.58 be postponed and that the General Assembly meet on this matter at the end of the forty-seventh session, that is, in the month of September.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Denmark on a point of order.

Mr. FRIIS (Denmark): The representative of Colombia has just made a proposal in which he asked the General Assembly not to take action today on the draft resolutions before us and to postpone its consideration of the documents. We should like to ask for a 15-minute suspension of the meeting in order to consider this proposal.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Mexico on a point of order.

Mr. TELLO (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): We listened most attentively, as always, to Ambassador Jaramillo, but it was not clear to us whether he wishes, on behalf of the countries that wish the decision before us to be postponed, that it be postponed until September, as my delegation heard him say.

We would like, through you, Sir, to ask the representative of Colombia whether he has a specific date in mind or whether he would agree to a date being set at this meeting for the corresponding decision to be taken.

Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): I would respectfully ask that we oblige the request of the representative of Denmark and that wait until the resumption of the meeting to clarify these other points.

The PRESIDENT: Having heard the Permanent Representative of Colombia, if there is no objection I shall now suspend the meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 11.25 a.m. and resumed at 11.55 a.m.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Egypt, who wishes to make a statement.

Mr. AWAAD (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): Upon the instructions of my Government, I asked to speak in order to give a summary of how the Foreign Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, at a meeting in Cairo, held prior to the 29th African Summit, dealt with the question of restructuring of the United Nations. The meeting considered the report of the African Group at Headquarters in New York on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. I am honoured to review the most important points dealt with and the recommendations approved.

First, the meeting reaffirmed the reaction of Africa and its full conviction of the necessity of restructuring and carrying out reforms in order to improve the efficiency of the United Nations in both the economic and social fields. It also affirmed -

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of the United States on a point of order.

Mr. MARKS (United States of America): I thought, Mr. President, that we were dealing with a motion for non-action, which, according to the rules, requires that a certain process be gone through. I do not understand why another representative has taken the floor to make a substantive comment, or a purported substantive comment.

The PRESIDENT: Before ruling on that point of order, I call on the representative of Egypt on a point of order.

Mr. AWAAD (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): With all due respect to what the representative of the United States said, I should like to report on what we have talked about during the suspension of the meeting. Sir, I asked to speak before the Group of 77 motion was moved. I asked to speak now, when the meeting resumed, to discuss what I had wanted to discuss earlier, and my delegation would like the opportunity -

The PRESIDENT: I call on the Permanent Representative of Finland on a point of order.

Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland): I apologize for interrupting the statement of the representative of Egypt, but I would like to know exactly where we find ourselves. I thought that we would proceed according to rule 74 of the rules of procedure, the rule under which the Permanent Representative of Colombia made his proposal. According to that rule, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, the motion.

I should like to know whether the representative of Egypt is now speaking in favour of the motion. At the same time, I should like to put forward my name as a speaker against the motion.

I only wanted to know the context in which this discussion is going on.

The PRESIDENT: In view of the points of order that have been raised, may we now go back to where we were? May I advise the representative of Egypt to submit what he has to say - the statement he was going to make - as a document of the General Assembly.

Let us now return to what we were doing. The representative of Colombia has moved, within the terms of rule 74 of the rules of procedure, that no action be taken at this meeting on the draft resolution in document A/47/L.58, as orally revised by the Permanent Representative of Uruguay.

I call on the representative of Morocco on a point of order.

Mr. AMAZIANE (Morocco) (interpretation from French): It is my understanding that the representative of Egypt asked to speak well before the representative of Colombia moved his motion. I do not know what rule of procedure gives priority to one statement over another. May we be advised what the rules of procedure say on this matter, bearing in mind that the representative of Egypt asked to speak well before the motion was moved? We would be very interested to hear what the rules of procedure have to say, to the extent that what they have to say is closely related to the subject under discussion in the General Assembly.

The PRESIDENT: As far as I recall, the request of the representative of Egypt was brought to my attention after the representative of Colombia moved his motion. That is why I made the ruling that I did.

May we now proceed with what we were doing, which was to deal with the motion that no action be taken at this meeting on the draft resolution in document A/47/L.58, as orally revised by the Permanent Representative of Uruguay.

Representatives are aware of rule 74, which reads as follows:

"During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote."

Does any member wish to speak?

Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland): I should like, in accordance with rule 74 of the rules of procedure, to speak against the proposal of the Ambassador of Colombia, which he said he moved on behalf of a large number of countries.

(Mr. Breitenstein, Finland)

I have not had the opportunity this morning to undertake the consultations necessary to say that I speak on behalf of this or that group of countries, but I believe I can say that I speak on behalf of those countries that are in favour of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields - in short, on behalf of all those that are deeply concerned and preoccupied in regard to the future of United Nations operational activities.

Thanks to the untiring, patient and devoted efforts of Ambassador Piriz Ballon and his collaborators, we reached agreement on a text in March. Subsequently the issue was reopened and further negotiations took place. In the light of that, my delegation does not believe that anything can be achieved by again postponing a decision. On the contrary, such an action would be met by many questions and a lot of suspicion in the outside world, in our capitals. What we are really doing now is voting on the reform itself, not on a procedural motion. That is why my delegation will cast a negative vote, because we are in favour of reform and strengthening United Nations operational activities.

Mr. MONGBE (Benin) (interpretation from French): Sitting at the back of the room, where I cannot be seen, I feel that I am hidden enough for my concealed position to reflect African wisdom. This African wisdom leads me to support the wise proposal made by Ambassador Jaramillo on behalf of a broad group of countries within this Assembly.

As Ambassador Jaramillo explained, this is not a time for confrontation. We spent a good week in another framework in which there was a fruitful dialogue between the North and the South. African wisdom prompts me to ask that we consider his motion.

(Mr. Mongbe, Benin)

If the rules of procedure allow, I have been authorized by the African Group to allow the representative of Egypt to speak now in my place, because he has new information to impart on behalf of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Permanent Representative of Benin, whom I have heard and seen.

Mr. SINON (Malaysia): The Malaysian delegation supports the motion moved by the representative of Colombia, on behalf of a large group of countries members of the Group of 77. The draft resolution as it is presented today, inclusive of the amendments proposed by the Chairman of the ad hoc working group, still poses some difficulties for my delegation.

Mr. MARKS (United States of America): Like the representative of Finland, I am speaking for a large number of countries and delegations from all parts of the world which have been seriously interested in the reform of the United Nations development system because we think it is necessary - nay, vital - to make that reform.

We have before us draft resolution A/47/L.58. It is admittedly an imperfect document, but it has been said - and repeated ad infinitum - that it includes important, significant reforms. These reforms are necessary for a very simple reason: the United Nations development system is in trouble. Over the last few years declining resources have been made available to it. I may note that this decline in resources is despite my Government's action last year to increase its contribution. There is a loss of resources because of a loss of credibility in the effectiveness of the system as a whole, and in particular of its governance.

The reform represented in draft resolution A/47/L.58 was launched by the Nordic countries - and all honour to them, as major donors - and they were supported by other donors in many other countries, North and South, in order to save the United Nations development system. Draft resolution A/47/L.58 was not only the result of six or seven months' work, but went back to last year's session of the Economic and Social Council. It was submitted three months ago. Delegations have expressed concern in a series of meetings about what it

(Mr. Marks, United States)

contains, and are now asking for more time on the grounds that it is not ready for agreement.

I note with great sadness, and some chagrin, that in the past three months my delegation and others have asked for - have pleaded for - negotiations, consultations, counter-proposals. None have been forthcoming. In the last three months we have tried to deal further with draft resolution A/47/L.58 and its apparent imperfections, and no one has come forward to say "Let us talk about it; here is a counter-proposal; here is a Group of 77 proposal; here is a proposal on behalf of myself and two other delegations; can we work this out?" Nothing has happened in the three months since draft resolution A/47/L.58 was first submitted. If the past three months have produced nothing, what do we expect to do in July, when many of us will be at the Economic and Social Council session in Geneva, or in August? I need make no comments about what will happen in August.

In the view of my Government and my delegation, the decision to postpone is not a technical decision; it is a substantive decision basically stating that reform is not for now and reform will not take place in the United Nations system. My delegation sees no virtue in postponing, which will result in a de facto defeat of the reform effort, so important to the future of the United Nations development system.

With that thought in mind, I hope delegations will seriously decide how to deal with what we view as not a procedural, but a substantive, motion.

Wisdom is important, wherever it comes from, and I should like to quote the old saying: "If not us then who? If not now, then when?"

The PRESIDENT: We have now heard two speakers in favour of, and two speakers against, the motion submitted by the representative of Colombia that no action be taken on draft resolution A/47/L.58.

Before we proceed, I call on the representative of Egypt on a point of order.

Mr. AWAAD (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): You, Mr. President, gave the representatives who spoke against the no-action motion the opportunity to present their positions in detail. When you called on the representative of Benin he clearly stated, in a non-controversial way, that he would speak briefly and then cede the floor to the Egyptian delegation to express Africa's position in accordance with information received directly from Cairo. On that understanding, he spoke briefly and then ceded the floor to Egypt.

The PRESIDENT: From what I hear the representative of Egypt saying, I do not think he has a point of order. Therefore, I should like to proceed, because I am governed by rule 74, which states:

"During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote."

I am guided by that, and that alone: two for, two against. My ruling is therefore that we have exhausted the number of speakers speaking on the motion of the Permanent Representative of Colombia. That is my ruling.

I call on the representative of Morocco on a point of order.

Mr. AMAZIANE (Morocco) (interpretation from French): We have nothing against your way of proceeding, in keeping with the rules of procedure, Mr. President. It is perfect. But I do not know if it was clear from the interpretation that the representative of Benin had yielded the floor to the representative of Egypt. Therefore, there have been two speakers against the motion and only one for, so there should be one more speaker in favour of the motion. Benin gave up its right to speak to Egypt.

The PRESIDENT: If the Permanent Representative of Benin did not wish to speak, then if he had only sent me a note before he spoke I would have known that he did not want to speak; but, having spoken, he has been one of those who spoke in favour of the Permanent Representative of Colombia's motion.

I call on the representative of Mexico on a point of order.

Mr. TELLO (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Before you decided to suspend the meeting, Sir, my delegation made - or tried to make - a compromise proposal. I should like to address the representatives of Finland, the United States, Benin, Malaysia and, of course, Colombia -

The PRESIDENT: What is the point of order? If the representative of Mexico will address it to me I will give a ruling.

Mr. TELLO (Mexico): I am going to do that, Sir. I am just trying to explain myself.

(spoke in Spanish)

I propose, through you, Mr. President, that we agree by consensus to postpone the decision, as requested by Colombia, Malaysia and Benin, and at the same time agree by consensus to set Friday, 10 September, as the date for the General Assembly to take a decision on this draft resolution.

The PRESIDENT: I now put to the vote the motion presented by the representative of Colombia that no action be taken at this meeting on draft resolution A/47/L.58, as orally revised.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Gabon, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

Abstaining: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela

The motion, was adopted by 70 votes to 37, with 14 abstentions.

The PRESIDENT: Since the motion has been adopted, no action will be taken at this meeting on draft resolution A/47/L.58, as orally revised.

Consideration of draft resolution A/47/L.58, as orally revised by the Permanent Representative of Uruguay, is therefore postponed to a later date during the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Mr. PIRIZ BALLON (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): For my delegation, the result of the vote is eloquent. The delegation of Uruguay withdraws its co-sponsorship of draft resolution A/47/L.58. Since we have submitted to you, Mr. President, the results of the ad hoc group's meetings and negotiations, I consider that the task conferred upon me has been carried out.

I should like to express my delegation's fervent hope that on the basis of the decision just adopted it may be possible to find a compromise formula between now and the end of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. Uruguay will always be prepared, in this context, to support any constructive compromise solution.

Mr. HAAKONSEN (Denmark): On behalf of Denmark, I should like to inform you, Mr. President, that Denmark withdraws its co-sponsorship of draft resolution A/47/L.58.

I should like to make a statement also on behalf of the European Community and its member States.

The European Community and its member States strongly supported -

The PRESIDENT: I am sorry to interrupt the representative of Denmark. The Permanent Representative of the Comoros wishes to speak on a point of order, and I now call on him.

Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros): I should just like to know what we are doing now. Are we hearing statements in explanation of vote after the voting? You did not say that, Mr. President.

I just want to make it clear that we have now finished our debate on this issue and we are now hearing statements in explanation of vote after the voting. Would you please make that clear, Mr. President? If you do not, we shall not know what we are doing.

The PRESIDENT: I am again advised that no statements can be made in explanation of vote on motions. These requests to be allowed to speak, however, came as points of order. I believe that points of order can be raised at any time. That is why I called on the representatives who had made those requests.

Of course, since I must be guided by the wishes of the Assembly, I ask whether it is indeed the view of the Assembly that this matter has been concluded and there is no need for any further explanation. Is that the wish of the Assembly? If, as I am advised, there can be no statements in explanation of vote, do we now adjourn the meeting?

I again call on the representative of Egypt on a point of order.

Mr. AWAAD (Egypt) (intepretation from Arabic): I should like to place my reservation on record. I should indeed like to explain my vote on the motion.

The PRESIDENT: I am advised that there can be no statements in explanation of vote on motions. Can we therefore adjourn the meeting at this time?

I call on the representative of the United Kingdom on a point of order.

Mr. BARNETT (United Kingdom): On a point of order, I wish to announce that the United Kingdom wishes to withdraw its co-sponsorship of draft resolution A/47/L.58.

The PRESIDENT: Are there any other points of order? Since we have entertained points of order, let us hear them all.

I call on the representative of Argentina.

Mr. SERSALE di CERISANO (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): Under rule 88 of the rules of procedure, members may explain their votes after the voting. Argentina has great respect for majority votes, and understands that the proposal for no action has been approved; we therefore hope that this negotiating process will continue. We withdraw our sponsorship of this draft resolution so that the new negotiators will feel free and not feel their hands tied to positions taken by the previous negotiators.

The PRESIDENT: Also on a point of order, I call on the representative of Austria.

Ms. FREUDENSCHUSS-REICHL (Austria): I also should like to withdraw my country's name from the list of sponsors with the view of facilitating further negotiations which, I hope, will be forthcoming.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Colombia, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): I am very sorry, but the debate is closed; a vote took place, there can be no further explanations of vote and all the explanations that are taking place now are out of order.

The PRESIDENT: On the advice I have, I agree with the representative of Colombia that there can be no explanations of vote, but representatives are requesting to speak on points of order to withdraw their sponsorship of the draft resolution. Does the Assembly not wish to hear those representatives?

(The President)

I call on the representative of Colombia.

Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): Once again, points of order are procedural, and what we are hearing are substantive statements, which are out of order.

The PRESIDENT: I call now on the representative of Australia.

Ms. TOMKINSON (Australia): I speak on a point of order to withdraw my delegation's sponsorship of the text.

The PRESIDENT: I call now on the representative of Brazil.

Mr. BAHADIAN (Brazil): I am asking for the floor, whether on a point of order or not I do not know; I am just seeking clarification of the situation we are in. As far as I understand it, after the vote we adjourned the debate under rule 74 of the rules of procedure. Thus, the debate on the resolution, including the question of sponsorship, has been concluded.

I seek clarification from you, Mr. President: what is the situation we are in now? As I understand it, the debate has been adjourned.

The PRESIDENT: I call now on the representative of Chile, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. GONZALEZ (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): On a procedural basis, I withdraw Chile's sponsorship of the draft resolution.

As far as substantive issues are concerned, I reserve comment.

The PRESIDENT: I call now on the representative of the United States.

Mr. MARKS (United States of America): On a point of order, or whatever, the United States withdraws its sponsorship of draft resolution A/47/L.58.

The PRESIDENT: I call now on the representative of Uruguay, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. PIRIZ BALLON (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): As we interpret it, my country's statement was an announcement, not a discussion following the vote. It was an announcement that countries have the right to make, i.e., either to add sponsorship or to withdraw it.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Denmark.

Mr. HAAKONSEN (Denmark): A point of clarification, Mr. President: according to which rule of procedure do you find that we cannot give an explanation of vote? As I see it, according to rule 88, there is a possibility of doing so; the rule states that:

"The President may permit members to explain their votes, either before or after the voting, except when the vote is taken by secret ballot".

Of course, if you, Mr. President, have a reference to another rule of procedure, we are prepared to be better informed.

The PRESIDENT: I call now on the representative of Cuba.

Mr. HIDALGO BASULTO (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I have asked to speak, Sir, on a point of order because I think you have been very strict in applying the rules; we wish to support that strict application of the rules. This meant that you did not give the floor to the representative of Egypt even though he said that he had a very important statement to make on behalf of various members of the African Group. I think that the rules you applied then should be applied now, and that this entire exercise is out of order, as was clearly explained by the representatives of the Comoros and of Colombia.

The PRESIDENT: I call now on the representative of Finland.

Mr. KAARIA (Finland): On a point of order, let me announce that Norway, Sweden and Finland are withdrawing their sponsorship of the draft resolution.

The PRESIDENT: I call now on the representative of Canada.

Mr. BAILLARGEON (Canada) (interpretation from French): Also on a point of order, Canada also wishes to withdraw its sponsorship of the draft resolution, for the same reasons as those who spoke before me.

The PRESIDENT: There are no other points of order. Therefore, the meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.